

**Disabilities Advisory Council (DAC) Meeting
(Approved Minutes)
October 21, 2004
Byrd Building
Richmond, Virginia**

Members Present: Daaiyah Rashid, Edward Senft, Elaine Senft, Van Johnson, David Wilber, Jesse Chapman, Eric Clark and Julie Palmer.

Members Absent: C. Michael Savory, Cheri Stierer, Donald Sublett, Melvin Fenson, Edward Zeigler, and Teja Stokes.

Staff Present: Colleen Miller, Sherry Confer, and Dee Vance.

Guest Present: Karen Durst

Call to Order: Daaiyah Rashid, the Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:10 A.M.

Welcome and Introductions: Mrs. Rashid welcomed the Council and everyone present to the Byrd Building, VOPA's office. Following the welcome, Council members, staff and guests introduced themselves to one another.

Public Comment: There was no public comment offered at the meeting.

Minutes: Van Johnson made a MOTION to approve the minutes from the meeting on July 29, 2004. Julie Palmer seconded the MOTION and it carried unanimously.

**Training:
Part C Early Intervention Services:** Karen Durst, Technical Assistant Consultant with the Infant and Toddler Connection of Virginia, gave a presentation on Part C Early Intervention Services, previous known as the Babies Can't Wait program. As a teacher, she participated in several activities with the organization. After accepting a position with the Infant and Toddler Connection of Virginia, she found that her current position fit both her interest personally and professionally and has allowed her to better serve her clients.

Ms. Durst began her overview of the program by giving a definition of Part C Early Intervention Services. Congress enacted the Early Intervention legislation in 1986 as an amendment to the Education of Handicapped Children's Act (1975) to ensure that all children with disabilities from birth through the age of three (3) would receive appropriate early intervention services. This formed Part H of the Act and would later be renamed Part C. She then explained that the Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) governs the system. The goals of the program are to enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities to minimize their potential for development delay, reduce the educational costs to our society, and minimize the likelihood of institutionalization. She also identified several participating state agencies and the lead agency in Virginia, which are

the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS).

Ms. Durst summed up her presentation by explaining the process from the time the child is referred to the local Part C System. She ended her presentation by giving the status of Part C. There were 4204 children served in 2003 as of December 1. This number increased 2.86% over 2002. The annualized Child Count was 9052. This was an increase of 8.07% over 2002.

Break:

Following Ms. Durst's presentation, the Council took a short break and reconvened at 11:25 A.M. to continue their meeting.

**Update on
VOPA Board Activities:**

Colleen Miller gave the update on VOPA Board Activities in the absence of Maureen Hollowell, Board Chairman. The Board met on September 10, 2004 and elected a new Chair, Maureen Hollowell and Vice Chair, P. Brent Brown Esq. The Board is planning a retreat on November 11th and 12th and Daaiyah Rashid, the liaison to the Board for the DAC, will attend the retreat on behalf of the Council.

Ms. Miller thanked Council for their assistance in developing the priorities for VOPA for the upcoming year. The agency was in the process of developing internal plans to carry out the work of the priorities and to ensure that the goals will be met.

Ms. Miller ended her summary of Board activities by informing Council that the Board meetings, for the next year, were set for 1/25/2005, 4/26/2005 (Tidewater), 7/19/2005 and 9/20/2005. She encouraged Council to attend the meetings and to check VOPA's website for the minutes of each meetings. A draft minutes from the last meeting will be posted ten (10) days following the meeting and the final approved minutes from the previous meeting will be posted three (3) days after the meeting.

Priority Planning Process

Sherry Confer thanked the Council for the assistance and participation in planning the annual focus groups. Ms. Confer informed Council that VOPA held two focus groups, one (1) in Roanoke and one (1) in Arlington, and invited twenty-one (21) different groups to attend the event. Of the twenty-one (21) groups invited, nine (9) attended the session in Arlington and ten (10) attended the session in Roanoke. Of all the topics discussed, housing and educating the public on VOPA and its services were two of the most requested services. Ms. Confer ended her summary by accepting questions from Council.

Lunch:

The meeting adjourned for lunch at 12:05 P.M.

Executive Director Update:

The meeting reconvened, after lunch at 12:45, with an Executive Director's update from Ms. Miller. Ms. Miller highlighted some of the work the agency was conducting to encourage people with disabilities to vote. Some of these activities include distributing VOTE Virginia brochures, developing a tool, in conjunction with other agencies, to educate people on the requirements of an accessibility polling place, and sending VOPA's employees to different polling sites on Election Day to conduct surveys on the accessibility of the site. She hoped that VOPA's

presence would make a difference in ensuring that persons with disabilities are treated fairly at the polling sites on Election Day.

Next Ms. Miller briefly explained the 4th Quarter Progress Report and VOPA's Litigation Report. Following her explanation of both reports, she entertained questions from the Council on the reports.

DAC Annual Report:

Following Ms. Miller's update, Ms. Confer discussed the DAC's Annual Report. She started by passing out a copy of the PAIMI Council's Annual Report for last year so the DAC could see the design of the PAIMI Council's report. Next, she suggested the DAC develop a report very similar to the PAIMI report and set aside time at each meeting to discuss the details of events that would be included in the report. She also suggested that Council either email their activities to Dee or complete the questionnaire, which will be in their packets, and bring the completed form to each meeting.

Other Business:

The meetings for the FY 2005 were announced and will be held on the following dates: 1/27/2005, 4/28/2005, and 7/28/2005

Adjournment:

There being no further business before them, David Wilber made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Van Johnson seconded the MOTION and it carried unanimously.

Reviewed by:

Disabilities Advisory Council

Date:

Thursday, January 27, 2005

**Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy
Mission Statement**

Through zealous and effective advocacy and legal representation, to: protect and advance legal, human, and civil rights of persons with disabilities; combat and prevent abuse, neglect, and discrimination; and promote independence, choice, and self-determination by persons with disabilities.